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ANOTHER PRODUCTIVE SEASON

Except for some cotton still to be picked and some corn to be husked, the field work for 1928 is ended. More land was in crops than last year. Yields per acre were slightly better than last year and better than average. Total crop production was 7.6 per cent above the average of the last 10 years.

Though crop production has increased, the number of mouths to be fed in this country has increased still faster. Per capita of the whole population, the crop output this year was one-half of one per cent below the 10-year average. Agricultural expansion must be tempered by the recollection that population is not increasing at as fast a rate as formerly.

Inevitably, some of the important crops were larger than average and some smaller. Potatoes, for instance, represent a case of overproduction. Last spring, it was freely predicted that if the acreage of potatoes was substantially increased and if growing conditions proved favorable, the crop would break the market. All three events have come to pass.

Hard winter and durum wheats, oats, barley, peanuts, and grain sorghums are large crops. Cotton, hay, buckwheat, flax, sweet potatoes, tobacco, and apples are about average crops. Cabbage and onions are short crops.

The corn crop is estimated at about 120,000,000 bushels more than last year, a better distributed crop of higher quality, the ears better filled and holding less moisture. The eastern Corn Belt has a much better crop than last year, fully a third more, while the South has around 14 per cent less corn. The carry-over of 1927 corn was practically exhausted by last month, so that, all told, we have not a great deal more corn on hand now than a year ago.

At this time of year, it is the marketing problem which looms large. Early this fall, wheat moved into the principal markets in such volume as to preempt a large part of available elevator and storage space. Had a corresponding volume of corn gone to market last month, there might have been some costly congestion. But rains early in November held back the corn. It will certainly be to the advantage of corn growers not to crowd the terminal storage space too hard, for the corn market this season needs all the stability that can be derived from orderly marketing and otherwise.

The potential demand for corn appears to be about as great as last season. There are fewer hogs but more cattle on feed, and relative prices favor heavy feeding of both hogs and cattle. A fourth more feeder cattle were shipped into the Corn Belt, through public stock-

yards, during July–October this year than last. Most of this increase went into feed lots west of the Mississippi. During those same four months, also, a few more lambs were shipped into the Corn Belt than last year, though it appears that the West as a whole will feed rather fewer lambs this winter.

The livestock industries have been a large factor in sustaining the general price level of farm products this fall. However, the index of unit purchasing power of all farm products, in terms of things farmers buy, dropped off 2 points to 88 for October, the five pre-war years being considered as 100.

THE TREND OF CROP PRODUCTION

	5-year average, 1909–1913 produc- tion	5-year average, 1922–1926 produc- tion	1927 produc- tion	1928, Novem- ber 1 esti- mate
	<i>Millions</i>	<i>Millions</i>	<i>Millions</i>	<i>Millions</i>
Winter wheat..... bushels..	443. 3	556	553	579
Spring wheat..... do.....	246. 8	252	319	325
All wheat..... do.....	690. 1	807	873	904
Corn..... do.....	2, 712. 4	2, 776	2, 774	2, 895
Oats..... do.....	1, 143. 4	1, 352	1, 184	1, 453
Barley..... do.....		192	264	351
Buckwheat..... do.....	17. 2	14	16	15
Flaxseed..... do.....	19. 6	20	27	20
Potatoes, white..... do.....	357. 7	394	407	466
Sweet potatoes..... do.....	57. 4	81	94	81
Tobacco..... pounds.....	996	1, 338	1, 211	1, 347
Peanuts..... do.....		671	807	861
Rice..... bushels.....	23. 8	36	40. 1	40
Hay, tame..... tons.....	67	91	107	93
Apples, total..... bushels.....	176. 3	199	123	183
Apples, commercial..... barrels.....		34	26	34
Peaches..... bushels.....		54	46	68
Sugar beets..... tons.....		7. 4	7. 8	7
Beans, dry..... bushels.....		16	17	17
Grain sorghums..... do.....		115	138	151

COMMENTS TO ACCOMPANY CROP REPORT AS OF NOVEMBER 1, 1928

Combining the production estimates of the 17 principal crops in proportion to 10-year average value per unit, the composite production of these crops this season was 4.8 per cent greater than last year and 7.6 per cent greater than the average production in the 10 years, 1918–1927.

By the same method of calculation, the per capita production of the principal crops of the United States this season was 3.6 per cent greater than it was last year and 0.5 per cent lower than the average per capita production during the last 10 years.

Corn.—The November estimate of corn production in the United States was 2,895,000,000 bushels. Slight increases in the Southern States were more than offset by small decreases in Iowa, Missouri, and Minnesota. Wind and rain damaged corn in parts of Iowa during the second week of October, and some frost damage was reported from other areas. Otherwise, the month of October was generally favorable to the drying out and harvesting of the corn crop. An average yield per acre of 28.3 bushels is reported this year. The present estimate of corn production is above the 1927 crop by about 122,000,000 bushels, or 4.4 per cent.

The percentage of corn that is of merchantable quality this year is reported as 82.9 per cent as compared with 75.2 a year ago and 80.7 per cent, the 10-year average.

Farm stocks of old corn on November 1, estimated at about 54,000,000 bushels, are less than half as great as the 113,000,000 bushels estimated on the farm a year ago.

Combining this year's production and farm carry-over from last year's crop, the farm supply of corn this season is 2,949,000,000 bushels, as compared with 2,887,000,000 bushels a year ago, or an increase of about 2 per cent.

While the farm supply of corn is only 2 per cent above a year ago, the quality of this year's crop, especially in the Corn Belt States, is far better than a year ago. The distribution or location of this year's crop is materially different than for the 1927 crop, as there is an increase in production of 36 per cent in the Corn Belt States east of the Mississippi River, but a decrease of about 14 per cent in the South.

Potatoes.—With the acreage of potatoes largely increased in nearly all important States as a result of encouraging prices for three years, and with the yield per acre the second highest on record, there appears to be a large supply of potatoes in all parts of the country. The total production of early and late potatoes combined is estimated at 465,651,000 bushels, compared with 406,964,000 bushels harvested last season. The estimate for this season includes some potatoes that may not be harvested and a considerable quantity of second-grade potatoes that will not be marketed.

Sweet potatoes.—Sweet potatoes, which were unprofitable in 1927, show a total production of 81,340,000 bushels. This is 12,588,000 bushels, or nearly 14 per cent, less than the excessively large crop of 1927, but slightly larger than the 5-year average. The acreage was considerably reduced because of unsatisfactory prices for last year's crop, but the yield per acre this year is less, being estimated at 95 bushels, compared with about 101 bushels in 1927, and 94, the average during the previous 10 years. The wet weather on the Atlantic coast and the drought in parts of Texas, which reduced the yield, also resulted in a rather low average quality.

Tobacco.—Tobacco production, responding to the generally favorable prices of 1927, shows an increase of 11.1 per cent. The reported yields indicate a crop of 1,346,566,000 pounds, compared with 1,211,301,000 pounds a year ago, and 1,337,561,000 pounds, the 5-year average. The average yield per acre this year is lower than usual, about 728 pounds compared with 768 pounds in 1927 and 785 pounds, the average of the previous 10 years, but acreage is much greater this year. It is estimated that 1,850,000 acres were harvested this year compared with only 1,577,000 acres in 1927, and 1,738,000 acres, the 5-year average. All important types except bright flue-cured and Virginia dark-fired show increased production over last year. The quality of the crop for the country as a whole is the lowest for many years, 74.4 per cent, compared with 80.5 per cent a year ago, and 80.6 per cent, the 10-year average. A special report on tobacco will be released.

Beans.—Dry edible beans are estimated to produce 17,056,000 bushels this year compared with 16,891,000 bushels in 1927. The increase results from increased acreage; the average yield per acre showing but little change, 10.2 bushels per acre this year compared with 10.4 last year, and 11 bushels, the 10-year average.

AVERAGE PRICES OF FARM PRODUCTS RECEIVED BY PRODUCERS

Actual prices received by producers at local farm markets as reported to the division of crop and livestock estimates of this bureau. Average of reports covering the United States, weighted according to relative importance of district and State.

	5-year average, August, 1909- July, 1914	October average, 1910- 1914	October, 1927	Sep- tember, 1928	Octo- ber, 1928
Cotton, per pound.....cents--	12. 4	12. 1	21. 0	17. 6	18. 1
Corn, per bushel.....do-----	64. 2	64. 8	87. 6	95. 1	84. 7
Wheat, per bushel.....do-----	88. 4	88. 1	113. 7	94. 4	98. 7
Hay, per ton.....dollars-----	11. 87	11. 49	10. 63	10. 59	10. 60
Potatoes, per bushel.....cents--	69. 7	65. 0	97. 9	64. 8	58. 0
Oats, per bushel.....do-----	39. 9	38. 4	44. 6	36. 7	39. 0
Beef cattle, per 100 pounds.dollars--	5. 22	5. 09	7. 55	9. 96	9. 63
Hogs, per 100 pounds.....do-----	7. 23	7. 37	10. 16	11. 17	9. 55
Eggs, per dozen.....cents-----	21. 5	23. 7	35. 6	31. 4	34. 9
Butter, per pound.....do-----	25. 5	26. 1	43. 4	44. 3	45. 2
Butterfat, per pound.....do-----			44. 4	46. 5	47. 0
Wool, per pound.....do-----	17. 7	16. 9	30. 9	36. 5	36. 0
Veal calves, per 100 pounds.dollars--	6. 75	6. 80	11. 04	13. 05	12. 62
Lambs, per 100 pounds.....do-----	5. 91	5. 35	11. 22	11. 97	11. 57
Horses, each.....do-----	142. 00	140. 00	76. 00	82. 00	80. 00

The farm price of hogs declined about 15 per cent from September 15 to October 15, due largely to a considerable increase in market receipts. Receipts at seven primary markets for the four-week period ending October 13 were 13 per cent larger than for a similar period ending September 15. Out-of-storage movement of pork products was also very heavy during the month of September. From September 15 to October 15, the corn-hog ratio declined from 11.7 to 11.3 for the United States and from 13 to 12.2 for Iowa, due to the failure of corn prices to decline as fast as the farm price of hogs.

The farm price of beef cattle declined approximately 3 per cent from September 15 to October 15, due to a decided increase in market receipts. For the four-week period ending October 13, cattle receipts at seven primary markets were 19 per cent larger than for a corresponding period ending September 15. For the first month in several years, September receipts of cattle were materially larger than during the corresponding month a year previous.

The farm price of corn declined sharply from September 15 to October 15, in spite of indications of a slightly smaller crop than was anticipated in September. The farm price decline amounted to about 11 per cent in the North Central States, 9 per cent in the South Central States, 7 per cent in the South Atlantic States, and 3 per cent in the North Atlantic and far western divisions. These price reductions have been accompanied by reports that the 1928 corn crop is of higher than average merchantable quality. In this respect, and in regard to the size of the crop, the carry-over of old corn, the concentration of production in the Corn Belt States and the prospec-

tive feeding demand, the 1928 crop closely resembles the crop of 1925. Monthly farm prices of corn from July to October, 1925, were 104.4, 106.5, 98.8, and 83 cents, respectively, while, in 1928, monthly farm prices of corn over the same period were 102.4, 98.2, 95.1, and 84.7 cents.

The farm price of wheat turned upward slightly in October after a continued price decline from May to September 15. The advance of 5 per cent in the farm price from September 15 to October 15 was fairly general throughout the country as a whole. The farm price increase was accompanied by indications of a greater demand for wheat due to reports of short wheat crops in Russia, Turkey, and North China, and short corn crops in the Balkan countries.

PRICE INDEXES FOR OCTOBER, 1928

Farm products figures from this bureau; commodity groups from Bureau of Labor Statistics (latter shown to nearest whole number). Shows year ago and latest available month.

FARM PRODUCTS

[Prices at the farm; August, 1909–July, 1914=100]

	October 1927	Septem- ber 1928	October, 1928	Month's trend
Cotton.....	169	142	146	Higher.
Corn.....	136	148	132	Lower.
Wheat.....	129	107	112	Higher.
Hay.....	90	89	89	Unchanged.
Potatoes.....	140	93	83	Lower.
Beef cattle.....	145	192	185	Do.
Hogs.....	140	154	132	Do.
Eggs.....	166	146	162	Higher.
Butter.....	170	174	177	Do.
Wool.....	174	205	202	Lower.

COMMODITY GROUPS

[Wholesale prices; 1926=100]

	October, 1927	Septem- ber, 1928	October, 1928	Month's trend
Farm products.....	105	109	104	Lower.
Foods.....	100	107	102	Do.
Hides and leather products...	113	121	118	Do.
Textile products.....	98	96	96	Unchanged.
Fuel and lighting.....	84	85	85	Do.
Metals and metal products...	97	100	101	Higher.
Building materials.....	92	95	95	Unchanged.
Chemicals and drugs.....	97	95	96	Higher.
House-furnishing goods.....	98	97	96	Lower.
All commodities.....	97	100	98	Do.

GENERAL TREND OF PRICES AND WAGES

[1910-1914=100]

Year and month	Whole-sale prices of all commodities ¹	Industrial wages ²	Prices paid by farmers for commodities used in—			Farm wages	Taxes ³
			Living	Pro-duction	Living production		
1910	103	-----	98	98	98	97	-----
1911	95	-----	100	103	101	97	-----
1912	101	-----	101	98	100	101	-----
1913	102	-----	100	102	100	104	-----
1914	100	-----	102	99	101	101	100
1915	103	101	107	103	106	102	102
1916	129	114	125	121	123	112	104
1917	180	129	148	152	150	140	106
1918	198	160	180	176	178	176	118
1919	210	185	214	192	205	206	130
1920	230	222	227	175	206	239	155
1921	150	203	165	142	156	150	217
1922	152	197	160	140	152	146	232
1923	156	214	161	142	153	166	246
1924	152	218	162	143	154	166	249
1925	162	223	165	149	159	168	250
1926	154	229	164	144	156	171	253
1927	149	231	161	144	154	170	-----
1927							
January	150	232	-----	-----	-----	162	-----
February	149	231	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
March	148	234	161	143	154	-----	-----
April	147	230	-----	-----	-----	166	-----
May	147	230	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
June	146	230	161	145	155	-----	-----
July	147	228	-----	-----	-----	172	-----
August	149	231	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
September	152	233	161	145	154	-----	-----
October	153	231	-----	-----	-----	175	-----
November	152	226	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
December	152	233	161	142	153	-----	-----
1928							
January	151	230	-----	-----	-----	161	-----
February	151	230	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
March	150	233	162	145	155	-----	-----
April	152	227	-----	-----	-----	166	-----
May	154	230	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
June	153	232	162	148	156	-----	-----
July	154	230	-----	-----	-----	170	-----
August	155	231	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
September	157	234	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
October	153	235	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics. Index for 1928 obtained by multiplying new series by 156.6.

² Average weekly earnings, New York State factories. June, 1914=100.

³ Index of estimate of total taxes paid on all farm property. 1914=100.

GENERAL TREND OF PRICES AND PURCHASING POWER

[On 5-year base; August, 1909–July, 1914=100]

Year and month	Index numbers of farm prices							Prices paid by farmers for commodities bought ¹	Ratio of prices received to prices paid
	Grains	Fruits and vegetables	Meat animals	Dairy products	Poultry products	Cotton and cottonseed	All groups, 30 items		
1910-----	104	91	103	100	104	113	103	98	106
1911-----	96	106	87	97	91	101	95	101	93
1912-----	106	110	95	103	101	87	99	100	99
1913-----	92	92	108	100	101	97	100	100	99
1914-----	103	100	112	100	105	85	102	101	101
1915-----	120	83	104	98	103	78	100	106	95
1916-----	126	123	120	102	116	119	117	123	95
1917-----	217	202	173	125	157	187	176	150	118
1918-----	226	162	202	152	185	245	200	178	112
1919-----	231	189	206	173	206	247	209	205	102
1920-----	231	249	173	188	222	248	205	206	99
1921-----	112	148	108	148	161	101	116	156	75
1922-----	105	152	113	134	139	156	124	152	81
1923-----	114	136	106	148	145	216	135	153	88
1924-----	129	124	109	134	147	211	134	154	87
1925-----	156	160	139	137	161	177	147	159	92
1926-----	129	189	146	136	156	122	136	156	87
1927-----	128	155	139	138	141	128	131	154	85
October—									
1923-----	113	123	106	153	165	221	134	154	87
1924-----	150	109	121	130	176	182	138	155	89
1925-----	135	152	141	146	175	171	143	158	91
1926-----	123	136	148	134	173	94	130	155	84
1927-----	128	138	145	139	167	169	139	154	91
1928									
January-----	125	144	138	145	177	152	137	(154)	89
February-----	128	153	139	145	144	141	135	(154)	87
March-----	136	174	139	142	122	147	137	155	89
April-----	144	179	142	139	121	154	140	(156)	90
May-----	160	181	151	136	128	166	148	(156)	95
June-----	152	168	150	134	127	162	145	157	92
July-----	142	156	157	134	134	170	145	² 157	² 93
August-----	120	137	162	135	140	153	139	² 157	² 89
September-----	117	127	174	141	156	142	141	² 157	² 90
October-----	116	114	160	143	168	147	137	² 157	² 88

¹ These index numbers are based on retail prices paid by farmers for commodities used in living and production, reported quarterly for March, June, September, and December. The indexes for other months are straight interpolations between the successive quarterly indexes.

² Preliminary.

THE TREND OF MOVEMENT TO MARKET

Figures show wheat, corn, hogs, cattle, sheep receipts at primary markets; butter receipts at five markets, compiled by this bureau.

Year and month	Receipts					
	Wheat	Corn	Hogs	Cattle	Sheep	Butter
	<i>1,000 bushels</i>	<i>1,000 bushels</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>1,000 pounds</i>
Total—						
1920-----	332,314	210,332	42,121	22,197	23,538	402,755
1921-----	435,606	340,908	41,101	19,787	24,168	468,150
1922-----	413,106	378,598	44,068	23,218	22,364	526,714
1923-----	386,430	271,858	55,330	23,211	22,025	545,380
1924-----	482,007	278,719	55,414	23,695	22,201	587,477
1925-----	346,381	223,604	43,929	24,067	22,100	574,489
1926-----	362,876	234,873	39,772	23,872	23,868	572,935
1927-----	455,991	241,245	41,411	22,763	23,935	581,592
October—						
1920-----	43,823	18,434	2,789	2,209	3,027	27,685
1921-----	42,014	34,502	3,214	2,311	3,042	37,548
1922-----	49,097	28,651	3,682	2,936	3,311	34,288
1923-----	38,380	16,541	4,816	2,802	3,465	38,272
1924-----	84,858	18,877	3,990	2,737	3,295	41,949
1925-----	34,111	12,187	3,390	2,789	3,198	43,468
1926-----	35,124	28,613	3,261	2,674	3,090	38,166
1927-----	71,696	19,132	3,039	2,635	3,587	38,301
1927						
November-----	42,394	15,924	3,666	2,346	1,896	33,607
December-----	23,903	36,777	4,209	1,691	1,609	33,687
1928						
January-----	22,313	37,116	5,306	1,771	1,705	42,271
February-----	21,403	44,453	5,267	1,516	1,669	41,140
March-----	24,639	39,520	4,639	1,465	1,520	45,748
April-----	17,483	19,724	3,483	1,684	1,591	44,721
May-----	24,718	23,289	3,723	1,799	1,952	54,427
June-----	13,883	18,345	3,548	1,558	1,913	69,650
July-----	64,846	24,535	2,924	1,650	1,898	65,145
August-----	78,372	20,485	2,523	1,829	2,362	55,339
September-----	72,579	19,608	2,600	2,191	3,386	44,969
October-----	82,346	15,305	3,664	2,540	3,938	41,956

The October movement of wheat to market increased somewhat and exceeded the same month of most recent years. The corn movement in October was lighter than last year, as was also true of cattle. Hogs went to market in heavy volume, likewise sheep and lambs. Butter receipts were moderately heavy.

THE TREND OF EXPORT MOVEMENT

Compiled from the Department of Commerce reports by division of statistical research of this bureau.

Year and month	Wheat ¹ including flour	To- bacco (leaf)	Bacon, ² hams, and should- ers	Lard	Total ³ meats	Cot- ton, ⁴ run- ning bales
Total—	1,000 bushels	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 bales
1920-----	311, 601	467, 622	821, 922	612, 250	1, 043, 500	6, 111
1921-----	359, 021	515, 353	647, 680	868, 942	786, 280	6, 385
1922-----	235, 307	430, 908	631, 452	766, 950	733, 832	6, 015
1923-----	175, 190	474, 500	828, 890	1, 035, 382	958, 472	5, 224
1924-----	241, 454	546, 555	637, 980	944, 095	729, 832	6, 653
1925-----	138, 784	468, 471	467, 459	688, 829	547, 361	8, 362
1926-----	193, 861	478, 769	351, 591	698, 971	428, 613	8, 916
1927-----	222, 792	506, 751	237, 798	681, 303	302, 936	9, 198
October—						
1920-----	43, 355	39, 394	58, 627	54, 174	70, 078	582
1921-----	25, 522	43, 465	35, 711	56, 886	44, 059	866
1922-----	25, 379	58, 353	50, 940	66, 333	60, 651	797
1923-----	19, 071	44, 948	72, 341	76, 378	83, 183	770
1924-----	53, 834	56, 227	45, 365	60, 813	52, 817	942
1925-----	9, 113	52, 211	30, 706	44, 745	37, 071	1, 414
1926-----	24, 098	53, 129	23, 873	46, 988	30, 354	1, 359
1927-----	36, 347	46, 548	16, 322	50, 355	21, 418	1, 113
1927						
November-----	26, 961	54, 307	13, 744	49, 636	17, 982	984
December-----	12, 211	47, 644	19, 947	62, 855	24, 453	745
1928						
January-----	11, 809	42, 600	22, 212	70, 660	27, 102	712
February-----	6, 725	41, 355	22, 175	79, 872	27, 850	614
March-----	7, 492	45, 957	28, 016	79, 929	34, 666	596
April-----	7, 880	41, 218	22, 074	56, 554	28, 607	467
May-----	8, 793	38, 726	21, 711	55, 540	28, 148	578
June-----	8, 230	30, 278	23, 850	53, 436	29, 014	444
July-----	7, 193	19, 417	25, 851	52, 940	31, 268	331
August-----	14, 775	26, 200	14, 913	50, 658	31, 300	253
September-----	22, 732	56, 953	13, 956	46, 158	18, 685	810
October-----	28, 548	88, 109	10, 055	59, 865	15, 724	1, 241

¹ Wheat flour is converted on a basis of 4.7 bushels of grain equal 1 barrel of flour.

² Includes Cumberland and Wiltshire sides.

³ Includes fresh, canned, and pickled beef; bacon, hams, and shoulders; fresh, canned, and pickled pork; fresh mutton and lamb.

⁴ Excludes linters.

COLD-STORAGE SITUATION

[November 1 holdings (shows nearest million; i. e., 000,000 omitted)]

Commodity	5-year average	Year ago	Month ago	Novem- ber 1, 1928
Apples.....barrels..	7	6	2	9
Creamery butter.....pounds..	105	119	128	106
American cheese.....do.....	66	59	82	82
Case eggs.....cases..	¹ 5, 921	5, 485	8, 542	6, 249
Total poultry.....pounds..	53	52	44	58
Total beef.....do.....	57	44	37	58
Total pork.....do.....	436	467	515	431
Lard.....do.....	50	72	127	82
Lamb and mutton, frozenpounds..	2	3	2	4
Total meats.....do.....	547	563	604	545

¹ 3 figures omitted.

Cold-storage holdings of apples were in excess of those of a year ago by about 3,000,000 barrels and in excess of the 5-year average by 2,000,000.

The out-movement of creamery butter slackened during October as compared with a year ago. The reduction in stocks was 22,167,000 pounds compared with 28,717,000 October, 1927. The apparent shortage as compared with a year ago has been cut to about 13,000,000 pounds; but holdings are in excess of the 5-year average by 700,000 pounds.

With regard to American cheese stocks, normally, holdings are consistently withdrawn after September 1; but there was an increase during October of 286,000 pounds. Holdings of this commodity, which are abnormally heavy, are about 23,000,000 in excess of a year ago and 16,000,000 above the 5-year average.

Withdrawals of case eggs amounted to 2,293,000 cases. This compares with the movement of a year ago, of 2,475,000. The surplus of last month was further increased to 764,000 cases as compared with November 1 a year ago.

The seasonal into-storage movement of frozen poultry continued during October with an increase in stocks of nearly 15,000,000. This, as was also the case during September, was somewhat heavier than normal. The 5-year average increase for October is 12,000,000 pounds. Last year, the in-movement was 9,000,000.

There were further increases in stocks of frozen and cured beef of slightly more than 20,500,000 pounds. This left holdings above last year by nearly 14,000,000 pounds and a little more than a million in excess of the 5-year average.

A continued out-movement of frozen and cured pork reduced stocks by 84,000,000 pounds. However, the apparent shortage of a month ago, which was 94,000,000 compared with the previous year and 39,000,000 for the 5-year average, has been reduced to 36 and 5, respectively.

Lamb and mutton stocks were increased over 100 per cent during the month and were a million and a half pounds heavier than a year ago and 2,000,000 above the 5-year average.

The out-movement of lard was 44,500,000 pounds compared with 46,000,000 for the same period a year ago. Stocks were still unusually heavy, exceeding last year's by 10,000,000 and the 5-year average by 33,000,000 pounds.

The cold-storage situation does not seem to have undergone a great deal of change during October. Butter, poultry, and meats are apparently good property, while eggs, cheese, and lard are in a less desirable position.

WILLIAM BROXTON,
Cold Storage Section, B. A. E.

GENERAL BUSINESS INDICATORS RELATED TO AGRICULTURE

	October, 1927	Septem- ber, 1928	October, 1928	Month's trend
PRODUCTION				
Pig iron, daily (thousand tons)---	90	102	109	Increase.
Bituminous coal (million tons)---	44	41	50	Do.
Steelingots (thousand long tons)--- ¹	3, 316	4, 148	4, 648	Do.
CONSUMPTION				
Cotton, by mills (thousand bales)----- ¹	614	492	619	Do.
Unfilled orders, steel corpora- tion (thousand tons)-----	3, 341	3, 698	3, 751	Do.
Building contracts in 27 North- eastern States (million dol- lars)-----	503	521	532	Do.
Hogs slaughtered (thousands)---	1, 883	1, 500	2, 309	Do.
Cattle slaughtered (thousands)---	1, 291	1, 069	1, 193	Do.
Sheep slaughtered (thousands)---	1, 148	1, 213	1, 403	Do.
MOVEMENTS				
Bank clearings (New York) (bil- lion dollars)-----	27	30	35	Do.
Carloadings (thousands)----- ¹	4, 465	5, 586	4, 701	Decrease.
Mail-ordersales (million dollars)---	51	51	64	Increase.
Employees, New York State factories (thousands)-----	485	466	477	Do.
Average price 25 industrial stocks (dollars)-----	233	284	294	Do.
Interest rate (4-6 months' pa- per, New York) (per cent)---	4. 00	5. 63	5. 50	Decrease.
Retail food price index (Depart- ment of Labor) ² -----	156	158	157	Do.
Wholesale price index (Depart- ment of Labor) ³ -----	97	100	98	Do.

¹ Revised.

² 1913=100.

³ 1926=100.

Data on this page, excepting livestock slaughter and price indexes, are from the "Survey of Current Business," Bureau of the Census, United States Department of Commerce.

SUMMARY OF DAIRY STATISTICS

[Million pounds, 000,000 omitted]

PRODUCTION

	October			January to October, inclusive		
	1928	1927	Per cent change	1928	1927	Per cent change
Creamery butter----	105	102	+2.2	1,299	1,322	-1.7
Farm butter-----	44	45	-2.7	516	525	-1.5
Total butter-----	149	148	+0.7	1,816	1,847	-1.6
Cheese-----	39	31	+12.4	374	328	+14.0
Condensed and evaporated milk-----	121	111	+9.3	1,642	1,667	-1.5
Total milk equiv- alent-----	3,814	3,690	+3.4	45,969	46,228	-0.6

APPARENT CONSUMPTION

[Including production, changes in stocks, and net imports or exports]

Butter-----	171	176	-3.1	1,757	1,766	-0.6
Cheese-----	48	47	+2.4	401	414	-3.2
Condensed and evaporated milk-----	122	127	-4.2	1,516	1,405	+6.4
Total milk equiv- alent-----	4,272	4,490	-2.6	44,691	44,799	-0.2

T. R. PIRTLE,
Division of Dairy and Poultry Products, B. A. E.

THE DAIRY SITUATION

A month ago dairy markets were in a more or less unsettled condition, largely due to the increase in production which occurred in September and early October. This had caused butter prices to depart from the usual fall tendency and swing downward, and it was not until the latter part of the month that these prices again resumed a normal fall trend. While the tone of the markets is decidedly steadier now (November 26) than it was 30 days ago,

butter markets particularly are still sensitive. Evidence of this is found in the fact that while prices early in the month were slightly higher than a year ago, a small break occurred after the second week of trading when immediate supplies seemed temporarily excessive. This change brought prices almost exactly in line with those of last year, and since then each succeeding day's business has seemed to restore confidence.

There has been some talk recently of butter imports, but definite business has not so far crystallized, despite the fact that a steamer is shortly due at New York from New Zealand with close to three-quarters of a million pounds of her cargo carried on an optional bill of lading. Asking prices on this butter are around 37½ cents, c. i. f., to which importers would have to add the 12-cent import duty and certain handling costs, as well as to make some allowance for profit. With the New York market staying at approximately 50 cents, offerings have not attracted much interest as yet, but it may be expected that until this butter has been definitely eliminated, it is bound to be of influence on domestic prices. Other large shipments of New Zealand butter are reported afloat. As is always the case, the final factor which will determine the ultimate disposition of such butter will be the price relationship between New York and London at the time the butter is actually available. It may be said in passing that reports point to record butter production in New Zealand and also in Australia, both of which countries are on the other side of the Equator and are, therefore, now entering their flush season. This whole situation is one which will have the closest observation of butter interests during the next few months.

In view of the foregoing, probable price reactions in the immediate future are a cause of considerable speculation. Last year's December prices followed a steady course, but this was an exception rather than the rule. It happened that stocks of butter in storage were quite heavy, that production was down somewhat, and that imports which did enter were not in such large quantities as to result in price depressions. Imports the following month (January, 1928), however, were larger, and an irregular and declining market occurred. Current gossip, which takes into account what has happened in previous years, indicates that much of an increase over present prices in December is beyond the expectation of market traders. Changes in the other direction will depend in no small degree upon the foreign situation.

In one respect, domestic markets are decidedly different this year than last, namely, the storage situation. On November 1, total United States stocks of butter in cold storage amounted to 105,900,000 pounds. Last year on the same date these stocks were 118,600,000 pounds. This year's reserve barely exceeds the average of the past five years. Production is holding up well, the last estimate (for October) indicating an increase over October, 1927, of 2.2. per cent. Still later trade reports suggest that November may possibly show as great or even a greater increase than this. Cheese and condensed milk production are both holding up above last year and have been for a couple of months. Cheese prices suffered severe declines in September and October, and while still some 3 or 4 cents below a year ago, are gradually working upward. These prices have not in themselves been a means of stimulating production, and it is true also that

a good many cheese factories have taken advantage of fluid milk and sweet cream outlets, but regardless of this, cheese production as a whole has shown sufficient increases the past 3 months to bring the total for the calendar year to date above that of the same period in 1927. In noting this, however, it should also be noted that cheese production is still below that of 1926.

In addition to the foregoing references to outstanding factors in dairy markets as November draws to a close, one further condition may bear mention, although in commenting on fluid milk markets, there are not the same definite measures of production to point to as are available for butter and cheese. Some evidence of a firm condition is indicated by the elimination entirely of surplus prices in one important area (Philadelphia) for the months of November and December, with the announcement that all milk for these months will be bought at basic fluid milk prices. Thus, all products are in a fairly strong position at the immediate moment. The butter situation, primarily, is the center of interest. It will bear watching.

L. M. DAVIS,

Division of Dairy and Poultry Products, B. A. E.

THE EGG AND POULTRY SITUATION

There has been very little change in the position and general trend of the egg markets during November. With the exception of receipts, which are now lighter than last year, the factors which were shaping the course of the markets during the fall months remain the same and still control the situation. Lighter receipts than a year ago, a smaller percentage of high quality eggs, an increased surplus of reserve stocks relative to last year, firm markets on high quality fresh and weak markets on undergrade fresh and all grades of stored eggs; these are the outstanding features of the egg market situation at the close of November.

Receipts in November, at the leading terminal markets, have been consistently lighter than for the year previous, the decrease up to the last week in the month being about 9 per cent from the same period in November, 1927. Since October receipts were somewhat more than 10 per cent greater than the previous year, this represents considerable change in the trend of arrivals. However, it was noted late in October that this change was under way, and the development was not confined to the current month. In general, producing conditions in November were much less favorable than October, and the volume of production may have been affected by the general nervous and unsettled condition of the market. The decrease also tends to confirm the reports of smaller laying flocks on farms this fall.

It has been noted, also, that the percentage of high-quality eggs in the current arrivals has shown considerable decrease, relative both to last November and previous months this year. As a result, prices of these eggs have advanced sharply. Fresh extras at New York, for example, have advanced about 11 cents from the 1st to the 26th of November, compared with an advance last year of 5 cents. As a result, prices for this grade of eggs are now on a par with a year ago, instead of 6 to 7 cents under as they were the first of the month.

An entirely different situation is seen on medium grades such as firsts. Here, prices have decreased one-half to 2 cents and are about 11 cents below a year ago. The intermediate grades show unusual, and extreme, ranges in price.

The market for storage eggs shows little change in trend and is following, for the most part, the same course as the lower grades of fresh. There has been practically no change, during November, on spot quotations for storage eggs. Contracts for future delivery in November remained unchanged throughout the month, with sales for December delivery showing slight declines.

The storage situation is regarded as weak, due primarily to the heavy surplus of stocks in storage relative to last year. On November 1, egg holdings amounted to 6,249,000 cases, compared with 5,485,000 cases a year earlier, a surplus this year over last of 764,000 cases. Due to the lighter receipts of November, withdrawals from storage compared more favorably with last year than has been the case for previous months. For this reason, it now appears that the relative surplus is no longer increasing, as it has done for many months. If this tendency continues, and the surplus is reduced, the storage-egg situation may be improved somewhat. But thus far, this development has not been sufficiently marked to alleviate the weakness now controlling the storage-egg market.

On the poultry markets at this season, the usual holiday movement of turkeys becomes of great interest. Early reports of this bureau indicated a slightly heavier crop than last year, with time of hatching about the same as last year, but general condition not quite so good. Developments that have occurred in marketing the Thanksgiving crop have tended to confirm most of this information. Receipts at dressing plants have been about the same as last year. But most reports indicate that the condition of many birds, especially in the Southwest, is none too good. That is, much of the crop was not finished in time for the Thanksgiving trade. For this reason, it would seem that supplies for the Christmas market may be more ample. Very little information is available concerning prices at the terminal markets, as the trade in turkeys does not occur until the last few days before the holiday. Prices at dressing points were reported as favorable to the producer and fully as high as a year ago.

C. E. ECKLES,

Division of Dairy and Poultry Products, B. A. E.

THE PROGRESS OF THE GRAIN MARKET

Probably the most depressing influence in our own domestic wheat market has been and still is the record crop in Canada this season and the large offerings of wheat from that country. There were unusually large stocks of wheat in Canada at the opening of navigation this spring held over from the 1927 harvest. Not all of this wheat had been shipped out when this season's crop of over 500,000,000 bushels, the largest crop ever raised in that country, came onto the market. Growers have already marketed more than half of this crop, and large stocks have piled up in both country and terminal elevators. Canadian exports since the 1st of August have been much larger than last year, but these include shipments from the

ports at the head of the Lakes, much of which still remains in eastern Canadian ports or in bond in United States markets. Exports of this wheat may still compete with offerings of United States wheat after the close of navigation cuts off the shipments from Canadian lake ports.

Mills have provided the best market for United States wheat so far this season and have taken about 25,000,000 bushels more than during the corresponding period last year. Grindings have been only a little larger than last fall, however, and mills have moderately larger stocks of wheat on hand than a year ago and are now buying only about current millings.

With the good harvests in Europe and large amounts of wheat being offered cheaply from the Southern Hemisphere and Canada, export takings of United States wheat have been much smaller than last year, so that when our larger crop is taken into consideration we have considerably more wheat still on hand than at this time a year ago.

This surplus is principally of hard winter and durum wheat. We have less soft winter wheat than our usual domestic requirements, and this grain is selling at good premiums over other classes of wheat. Soft winter wheat mills are supplementing the short supply of soft red winter with shipments of soft white wheats from Washington and Oregon. They are also substituting larger amounts of low protein hard winter and thereby increasing the demand for this type of wheat which is relatively cheap at present.

The supply of hard red spring wheat is not much above domestic milling requirements for this wheat, and the current offerings at the markets are now being readily taken. Premiums ranging from 5 cents to 20 cents per bushel over basic prices are being paid for wheat of good milling quality, testing 13 to 14 per cent protein.

The amount of durum wheat still to be marketed is unusually large since we had a record crop this year, and export demand has been slow because of good crops in Italy and North African countries which compete with United States durum in European markets. Highly colored amber durum, which is relatively scarce, is bringing higher prices than a month ago, but the low grades are slow sale and are being taken mostly for feed on a feed price basis.

Hard winter wheat continues to move slowly, but there may be a better export demand for this grain when the Canadian movement is restricted by the close of lake navigation. Mills are taking most of the offerings of high protein good quality wheat, leaving the lower grades for feed and export. There is a shortage of feed grains in Europe again this season which may increase the use of wheat for feed and result in larger takings of North American wheat. In addition, wheat prices are low. This may tend to increase consumption for flour abroad and thereby enlarge the market for our hard winter wheat. The increase in the accumulations of wheat in store in the domestic markets has now been checked, indicating that marketings are now smaller than current requirements. This may lessen somewhat the weakening influence which these ever-increasing stocks have had upon the market during the past three or four months.

The Southern Hemisphere crop, which is now just beginning to be marketed in Australia and Argentina, will be an increasingly important factor in the world's wheat market during the next few

months and will influence materially the foreign demand for United States hard winter wheat and also the white wheat grown in the far Northwest.

The corn market is in a firmer position than wheat. Our supply of old-crop corn was practically exhausted when the new crop was ready for market, so that although this year's harvest was well above that of last season the total amount available for domestic needs or exports is not so much larger than a year ago.

The crop is better distributed than last fall with more corn in the States east of the Mississippi River. The quality is good this year, but rains in the Central West during the early part of November delayed country marketings, and receipts at the markets have been just about equal to current needs of feeders and industries, which are the principal buyers. It is well that marketings have not been large, for elevator storage space is limited because of the large stocks of wheat in storage at several of the important markets. Farmers would do well not to overload the markets with heavier shipments than can be readily handled, since a congestion of new corn in the markets generally causes larger declines in prices than the general market situation warrants.

The potential demand for corn for the year as a whole appears to be about as large as last season. There are fewer hogs to feed, but livestock prices favor heavy feeding of both hogs and cattle and more cattle have been shipped to feeding areas. The short crop of corn in Europe and diminishing supplies in Argentina, where European buyers have been getting most of their corn, is causing a more active export demand for United States corn this season. Stocks of corn in the markets at this time are much smaller than a year ago but are increasing at a normal rate.

G. A. COLLIER,
Grain, Hay, and Feed Market News Service, B. A. E.

THE FLAX-MARKET SITUATION

With the domestic supply of seed materially smaller than last season, the flaxseed market has developed a firmer tone. Unusually high prices of linseed meal and a sharp reduction in crushers' stocks of linseed oil during the past quarter contributed to the firm market situation. The world supply of flaxseed, according to current estimates, is not much different from last season, but North American supplies are smaller and more seed will be required from Argentina if domestic crushings are maintained at last year's record figure.

According to the latest estimates, the supply of domestic flaxseed for the 1928-29 season will be about 8,000,000 bushels smaller than last season. The crop according to the November 1 forecast will total about 20,026,000 bushels compared with 26,570,000 bushels harvested last season. Stocks in crushers' hands at the first of October totaled 3,686,000 bushels and about 706,000 bushels were in store at the principal markets, making a total supply of 24,418,000 bushels. Allowing about 1,500,000 bushels for seed requirements, there remained a commercial supply of less than 23,000,000 bushels compared with nearly 31,000,000 bushels October 1 a year ago.

The smaller crop this season was due not only to a reduction of 76,000 acres in the area seeded but also to lower yields. The average

yield was reported at 7.1 bushels compared with the relatively large yield of 9.1 bushels last year and a 10-year average yield of 7.1 bushels. The quality of the crop is lower this season, being 86.5 per cent compared with 89.3 per cent last year and 89.7 per cent the 10-year average.

The smaller crop this year is being reflected in decreased receipts at the principal markets, including Duluth, Minneapolis, and Milwaukee. About 10,500,000 bushels of flax were received at these markets during September and October compared with 12,904,000 bushels for the corresponding period last year, when total receipts for the season at these markets were 23,748,000 bushels. This lighter movement is also reflected in a slower accumulation of stocks. At the close of the week ending November 10, only about 2,808,000 bushels of flax were in store at the markets reporting to the United States Department of Agriculture compared with 7,159,000 bushels a year ago. These statistics would indicate that slightly less domestic flaxseed has passed into consuming channels during the first two months of the current crop year than were taken during the corresponding period last season. Imports also are running smaller than a year ago. Imports for September totaled about 1,254,000 bushels compared with 1,716,000 bushels during September, 1927. Should the record crushings of last season be equaled this year, considerably more seed will have to be imported during the remainder of the season than was brought in last year.

(From report of this bureau, issued November 15, 1928.)

CATTLE-FEEDING SITUATION, NOVEMBER 1, 1928

The Corn Belt demand for stocker and feeder cattle during October this year, while above that of October, 1927, fell off rather sharply compared to what it had been during July, August, and September of this year. The shipments of stocker and feeder cattle into the Corn Belt States in October this year were about the same as in October, 1927, with prices nearly 20 per cent higher than in October last year. For the three months, July to September, this year, the movement into the Corn Belt was 45 per cent larger than for these months in 1927, with prices 35 per cent higher.

The total shipments of unfinished cattle through public stockyards into the Corn Belt States for four months, July to October, were 236,000 head, or 25 per cent larger than for the same months in 1927; were about the same as for these months in 1926 and 1925, but 4 per cent below the 5-year average for this period. Nearly all of the increased movement this year was into the States west of the Mississippi River, total shipments into this area for the four months this year being the largest for the period in four years. The movement into the States east of the river, while about 4 per cent larger than last year, was much below any other year since 1921.

It does not seem likely that the movement of stockers and feeders into the Corn Belt during November and December will be as large as the comparatively heavy shipments during this period last year. The supply of available cattle will be smaller and the demand for feeders less urgent. The total movement for six months, July to December, this year will doubtless exceed last year but will be smaller than for any other year since 1921.

Reports from the Western States indicate that cattle feeding this coming winter will probably be on a considerably reduced scale in most States in that area. West of the Continental Divide winter range prospects are not good, and more hay and grain will be needed for wintering both stock cattle and sheep than for some years. As a result, the price of hay is considerably higher than a year ago. This, and the high level of feeder-cattle prices is expected to discourage feeding in most States. In northern Colorado smaller supplies than last year of both alfalfa hay and beet pulp will probably reduce cattle feeding, but there may be some increase in other sections of the State.

(From report of this bureau, November 12, 1928.)

LAMB-FEEDING SITUATION, NOVEMBER 1, 1928

The movement of feeding lambs to November 1 into feeding areas in the Corn Belt and Western States points to some decrease in feeding in the coming winter compared to the winter of 1927-28. A possible late movement of feeders into some of the western areas, however, may bring the total for that area above the November 1 indications and the total for the country up to that of last winter.

Shipments of feeding lambs passing through markets into the Corn Belt States were smaller in October this year than last. As a result of this decrease, the total shipments for the four months, July to October, inclusive, were only about 100,000 head or 6 per cent larger than for these months in 1927, and about 200,000 head smaller than for this period in 1926.

There was a rather sharp dropping off in the Corn Belt demand for feeder lambs during October this year compared both to demand in August and September this year and in October last year. As a result, the price of feeder lambs averaged over \$1 a hundred less in October this year than last, although shipments were less, and many so-called "two-way" lambs went to slaughter that otherwise would have been taken for feeders.

Reports from Colorado, covering shipments into the State in October and prospective shipments in November and early December, indicate a reduction of around 300,000 head in the number of lambs to be fed this winter compared to last. All of this reduction is in the Greeley-Fort Collins area of northern Colorado, while other areas, including the northeastern section around Sterling, will probably feed as many or more lambs than last year. Reports from States west of the Continental Divide point to decreased lamb feeding in most of the States in that area, but the movement into feeding sections up to November 1 had not progressed sufficiently to make possible a definite forecast. Some increase in feeding in Texas is indicated.

Lambs moving into Colorado are reported to be of lighter weight and in thinner condition than last year, and more of them will probably be fed for a late market than last season.

(From report of this bureau, November 13, 1928.)

THE SITUATION AS TO LAND VALUES

During the period March 1, 1927, to March 1, 1928, farm real estate values, averaged for the United States as a whole, showed the smallest decline recorded in any single year since the drastic postwar deflation set in. This is based upon a survey including replies from 50,000 farmers, land dealers, appraisers, and others. Values of improved farm land per acre declined but 2 per cent on the average during 1927 and early 1928, as compared with a decline of twice that figure registered between March 1, 1926, and March 1, 1927. As of March 1, 1928, the national average value per acre was 17 per cent above the pre-war level, compared with a figure of 19 per cent above pre-war reached on March 1, 1927, and a peak of 70 per cent above recorded on the same date in 1920. Averaged for the entire country, the current figure of 17 per cent above pre-war represents approximately the same level of values as prevailed in 1917.

The major declines in values continued to be felt in the same regions in which the heaviest losses appear to have centered in recent years, principally the Corn and Cotton Belts. However, in both of these, the decreases shown for the year ended March 1, 1928, were smaller than those registered during the corresponding preceding period from March 1, 1926, to March 1, 1927.

In some Southern States, values hardened materially. Equally encouraging results were reported from Montana and the two Dakotas where values for the first time in many years exhibited a tendency toward comparative firmness. Although continuing their decline of the last seven years, Iowa values showed the smallest decrease recorded since the war-time peak was reached, and in all of the mid-Western States without exception values showed smaller losses for the year ended March 1, 1928, than for the corresponding period ended March 1, 1927. The bureau makes no forecast as to whether or not the "bottom" has been reached in mid-western farm land values.

Farm real estate values in the New England and Middle Atlantic States showed very little change. Pacific coast values declined very little on the average. In both of these sections values, taken generally, have been relatively stable during the last three years, although occasional slight declines took place. A third section in which the downward trend of values was apparently halted includes the eight States of the West, ordinarily designated as the "mountain group." In this division, the survey indicated values to be exhibiting a trend now reasonably stable.

Data on foreclosures and related losses of title through default, averaged for the country as a whole, indicated a slight decline to have taken place during the year ended March 15, 1928. From a rate of 23.3 farms per thousand recorded in the 12-month period ended March 15, 1927, the volume of "forced" transactions dropped to 22.8 farms per thousand. Notable decreases were shown in the Mountain States, particularly in Montana and in the Dakotas, where the loss rates in recent years have been the highest in the country, having reached figures of 5 and 6 per cent of all farms in the latter three States. Most of the New England States likewise have shown a moderate decline in the forced-sale classification during the last three survey periods, the bureau finds. Frequent increases, however, took place in the remaining States during the 1927-28 survey period, the marked

decreases in the highest loss-rate States having been offset by a larger number of small increases elsewhere.

Voluntary sales decreased. The downward drift was rather general. Outstanding exceptions to the trend were found in Montana, Wyoming, and the two Dakotas. Buyers in such sales were mostly local active farmers buying for personal or family operation.

The farm-tax burden continues to be a heavy charge upon land ownership, taxes on farm real estate having risen still further during 1927 to reach a figure 158 per cent higher than before the war. The 1926 farm-tax level is estimated to have been 153 per cent above pre-war and the 1925 level 150 per cent above. Although the recent trend does not show the sharp upward rate characteristic of the years immediately following the close of the war, the continuing recent increases are not reassuring to owners of American farm property, and immediate relief may be difficult to obtain.

On the whole, the farm-lands market continued to be comparatively inactive during the year with buyers few and cautious although here and there a fair degree of local activity was shown.

(From report of this bureau, November 15, 1928.)

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

With the shipping season three-fourths over, it seems that the fruit and vegetable growers have done their part well. The gain of 3 to 5 per cent in shipments compared with the season before belongs mostly to the fruits and resulted from crops 5 to 15 per cent above the average, while some of the important vegetables had a production considerably lighter than usual.

Shipments the first part of the season do not always correspond closely with production. Onions and cabbage were light crops, but shipments were active the first few months, because the light local supplies and rising prices tended to start distant car lots to market. For the opposite reason, potato shipments have not yet caught up with last season, because of heavy local supplies and unattractively low prices.

General price levels of these products, as usual, have corresponded with supposed size of the crop rather than with current shipments, although shipments apparently have been connected somewhat with the lesser ups and downs of the market season. Cabbage and onion shipments were about as usual the first two months of the season and imports much heavier, yet the prices have been two or three times as high as in the fall of 1927.

POTATO SHIPMENTS MODERATE

Main-crop potato shipments have been nearly one-third less than last season so far, but prices are not one-third higher but at least that much lower. One reason for the comparatively light shipments of the main crop is the liberal supply of home-raised potatoes in every little town of the Corn Belt and farther east. Until these local potatoes are out of the way, there is comparatively little demand for car-lot shipments. This sort of thing happens year after year when the general potato crop is a large one. The near-by competition really depresses the price more than that from a distance, because all the

local potatoes will be sold anyhow, perhaps even the No. 2's, but the crops far away from market are hindered by freight cost and will not be forwarded when the price is too low. A limit of that kind is some degree of general market protection against extreme declines.

The low price itself affords some ground of hope for improvement in the potato market. Prices have been lower this season than in most other heavy crop years, well below cost of production in many sections. Even so near to the markets as central New York the growers in late November were getting only 35 cents per bushel for potatoes in bulk, and even this price was better than most large producers have been receiving in Maine or in the West. Prices are still lower in Canadian shipping sections, but, owing to the tariff barrier, the imports of table stock have been negligible. These generally low prices have caused some people to expect more or less advance in the market with the beginning of the storage season during the winter and spring months, but so far the gains since digging time have been usually only 5 to 10 cents per 100 pounds, except on a few special varieties, like the Western Russet Burbanks, which have been in moderate supply and selling at nearly double the price of round white stock in some markets.

SOME POSSIBILITIES

Potato holders have not lost sight of the good winter price recovery made after some other big crop years, particularly those of 1922 and 1923. Even the 15 to 35 per cent gain of those seasons would help shippers considerably. In those years, early conditions were as discouraging as at present. But there was considerable waste and shrinkage. Part of the spring rise in 1923 resulted from a shortage of new potatoes after frost damage. The figures for this season suggest that many potatoes were fed out or wasted during the time of low prices in the fall. A frost in the southern potato region in the late spring might develop a better demand for old potatoes which again might be found in lighter supply than expected. Very low prices in the fall tend to considerable waste, and they encourage strict grading and the liberal use of potatoes by some classes of consumers, including an active demand from starch factories.

In short, the unfavorable market feature is chiefly the heavy production. Among the favorable conditions and possibilities are the rapid shrinkage of the crop from various causes, the lack of competition with imports, the close grading in many shipping sections, the continued active consuming demand, and the chance of favorable new developments later in the season.

This year of heavy production may help future markets in an unexpected way. It often happens that producers are more inclined to get together and plan improvement when they seem forced to do something because prices are low. Various associations have been taking up the idea of advertising the merits of potatoes for food and urging the shipment of clean, No. 1 potatoes only, and with Federal inspection when possible. Sometimes the first decisive steps in better marketing of a crop have been taken in years of heaviest production.

ONION HOLDERS CONFIDENT

It is seldom that the onion holdings have been in such firm hands. Growers in some States are reported entirely sold out, a most unusual condition of affairs before the end of the year. For 15 States which

ship most of the late onions, the holdings in growers' hand November 1 were only 1,286 cars, compared with over 2,000 a year ago and from 5,000 to 6,000 in the years preceding. The main onion crop itself is considerably the lightest in six years. Holdings by growers, of course, do not represent all available stocks, but it seems that with about 9,000 carloads in commercial storage, compared with nearly 15,000 a year ago, the supply for the rest of the season is likely to be limited. The large proportion of low-grade onions in the eastern crop has helped in one way to increase consumption, because of the lower prices at which such grades were sold. With these cheap onions mostly out of the way and over 15,000 cars already shipped, the unusually strong position of first-class stock in storage seems to explain the general confidence shown by holders. Prices in producing sections, west or east, have ranged from \$3.50 to \$4.25 per 100 pounds in late November. Prices are almost as high in the country as in the city because so many holders are waiting confidently for still stronger city markets.

Imports of foreign onions have been fully 1,000 carloads greater than last season, but this increase does not go far to make up the apparent deficiency. The first new supply is likely to come from Chile toward the end of the winter months. These are of the Bermuda class. Later come the Egyptian onions which compete more directly with northern stock in late storage. Southern growers have cut down their intended acreage about 10 per cent, compared with last year's extremely heavy plantings, but the southern Bermuda acreage expected is still about that much greater than for the two years next preceding.

CABBAGE STOCKS MODERATE

Estimated stocks of long-keeping cabbage in growers' hands November 1 were reported about 9,000 cars, compared with over 17,000 a year ago, and holdings in commercial storage were about 8,000 cars, compared with about 15,000 last season. In the two principal winter shipping States, Wisconsin seems to have fairly close to the usual quantity, but the shortage in New York is considerable, with 5,407 cars in storage, compared with 11,800 a year ago and from 3,000 to 9,000 cars in preceding years.

The price of cabbage has been coming back rapidly, exceeding even the highest level reached in October. The general range in late November in the cities was \$35 to \$45 per ton, and \$32 to \$35 in eastern and northern producing sections. The cabbage owners appeared almost as confident as those who were holding stocks of onions. The prospect of fully the usual competition from the southern crop appeared to be the most doubtful feature of the situation.

SWEET POTATOES STEADY

With daily shipments of sweet potatoes only 50 to 75 cars most of the time, the supply continues moderate in consuming markets, and prices have been well maintained, with a slightly advancing tendency. Sales in late November for Eastern Shore yellow stock were running at the rate of \$1.75 to \$2.50 per barrel in eastern cities and about \$3 in the Middle West. The general price level is about the same, or a little higher, compared with last season or with the early part of this season. The difference in the crop situation this

year is chiefly the lighter production in the southern part of the region growing mainly the moist-fleshed type of sweet potato. Eastern Virginia, the leading section shipping to northern markets, appears to have sent out most of its surplus production, and from now on the market position may be affected somewhat by the lighter holdings in some other States.

CELERY HIGHER

The price of celery has responded to reports of lighter supplies in eastern cold storage, and the tendency in November has been slightly upward. Not only was the stock in storage about one-third less than last season, but much of the celery was not of top-market grade. California producers will have about the usual acreage. Florida is likely to increase acreage about one-sixth, but old celery will be mostly out of storage long before the southern crop is ready.

FIRM APPLE MARKETS

The apple markets continue remarkably steady, with most price changes upward since the end of the harvest season for winter fruit. Some sales have been made out of cold storage at a slightly higher level than common storage stock. Good eastern barreled apples in consuming markets have been selling mostly \$4.50 to \$6.50 and bushel-basket stock from \$1.25 to \$1.85. Northern boxed apples are in better position because of the decreasing proportion of small sizes in all grades, some of which were selling early in the season at \$1 up to \$1.50 per box or lower. Much of the standard fruit offered now brings from \$1.15 to \$1.60 per box, and some leading varieties, including Winesaps, show advances of about 10 cents, which correspond with slight gains in some eastern consuming markets. Prices in southern apple sections have been remarkably steady from first to last, with the general range on standard grade \$3.25 to \$4 per barrel, according to variety.

Unsatisfactory conditions in foreign apple markets tended to check any advancing tendency here in early November, but a somewhat more encouraging price position appeared at some German and British sales around the middle of the month. Reports of moderate, sometimes light, crops in apple sections of Europe have been confirmed by later developments, offering encouragement for the last half of the main export season.

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